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AMERICAN UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS' STATEMENTS ON RUSSIA'S 2022 INVASION OF UKRAINE: A CORPUS-ASSISTED CRITICAL DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

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This study examines how top U.S. university Presidents addressed Russia’s 2022 large-scale invasion of Ukraine in their official statements, aiming to uncover rhetorical strategies and the values guiding higher education leaders in crisis communication. The research employed a corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis framework utilizing tools such as Google Trends, sentiment analyzers, and Voyant. This approach enabled a comprehensive research design, incorporating contextual and textual analyses, communication strategy typologies, and interpretative synthesis to derive conclusions and suggest areas for future research. The findings revealed that a key feature of university leaders' crisis communication during military conflicts is their ability to balance discursive strategies within the identified genre logic, integrating various arguments, rhetorical techniques, and pragmatic patterns. Criticism of the invasion and penalization of the strategic projects are accompanied by statements of support of students and teachers from both conflicting countries as well as appeals for peace-making efforts. The rhetorical strategies include arguments of logos, pathos, and ethos, along with both positive and negative politeness strategies, and a mix of explicit and implicit speech acts. In the appellative genre, statements confronting the invasion utilize various linguistic devices, such as connotative vocabulary, military terminology, proper names as well as grammatical features like negated active voice constructions, and stylistic elements such as personal reminiscences. This type of communication emphasizes conservative and benevolent values, highlighting the strong commitment of the U.S. university leaders to

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Заяви президентів американських університетів щодо вторгнення Росії в Україну у 2022 році:
критичний дискурс-аналіз з використанням корпусних даних (Англійською)

academic integrity while stressing solidarity and collegiality. Additionally, it underscored diplomatic efforts toward achieving peace. The research offers insights into how higher education leadership navigates communication during wartime, contributing to a broader understanding of strategic and crisis communication.

Keywords: *academic-administrative discourse, critical discourse analysis, corpus studies, university leaders' communication, Russia's 2022 large-scale invasion of Ukraine, pragmatics, rhetorical devices.*

ЗАЯВИ ПРЕЗИДЕНТІВ АМЕРИКАНСЬКИХ УНІВЕРСИТЕТІВ ЩОДО ВТОРГНЕННЯ РОСІЇ В УКРАЇНУ У 2022 РОЦІ: КРИТИЧНИЙ ДИСКУРС-АНАЛІЗ З ВИКОРИСТАННЯМ КОРПУСНИХ ДАНИХ

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У статті досліджуються офіційні заяви президентів провідних вищих навчальних закладів США щодо вторгнення Росії в Україну у 2022 році з метою виявлення комунікативних стратегій та цінностей, що визначають поведінку лідерів вищої освіти в умовах кризової комунікації. У межах методології критичного дискурс-аналізу використано корпусні дані та зінтегровано традиційні й цифрові аналітичні інструменти, зокрема Google Trends та Voyant. Такий підхід забезпечив проведення комплексного дослідження, яке інтегрує контекстуальний та текстовий аналіз, типології комунікаційних стратегій та інтерпретаційний синтез для формулювання висновків і визначення перспективних напрямків для подальших наукових розвідок. Результати дослідження показали, що ключовою характеристикою кризової комунікації лідерів університетів під час військових конфліктів є їхня здатність збалансовувати дискурсивні стратегії в межах ідентифікованої жанрової логіки, інтегруючи різноманітні аргументи, риторичні техніки та прагматичні патерни. Критика вторгнення та заяви щодо припинення фінансування стратегічних проєктів поєднуються з підтримкою студентів і викладачів з обох сторін конфлікту та закликами до миротворчих зусиль. Використовуються риторичні стратегії, включаючи аргументацію логосу, пафосу та етосу, а також позитивні й негативні стратегії ввічливості, що поєднують експліцитні й імпліцитні мовленнєві акти. У заявах апелятивного жанру, що критикують вторгнення, застосовуються різні лінгвістичні засоби, зокрема

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American University Presidents' Statements on Russia's 2022 Invasion of Ukraine: a Corpus-Assisted Critical Discourse Analysis (in English)

конотативна лексика, військова термінологія, власні імена, граматичні конструкції активного стану з запереченням і стилістичні елементи, такі як особисті ремінісценції. Висновки показали, що сучасне академічне середовище США у даному типі комунікації заохочує систему консервативних, гуманних цінностей, а також академічну добродетель, апелюючи до співчуття, солідарності, колегіальності та дипломатичних зусиль заради досягнення миру. Дослідження дає уявлення про те, як керівництво вищої освіти США здійснює комунікацію в умовах війни, сприяючи кращому розумінню стратегічної та кризової комунікації, зокрема в академічному контексті.

Ключові слова: академічно-адміністративний дискурс, критичний дискурс-аналіз, корпусні дані, комунікація лідерів університетів, повномасштабне вторгнення Росії в Україну у 2022, прагматика, риторичні засоби.

1. Introduction

1.1. Defining the academic-administrative discourse. The systematic research into the discourse of the university leaders and strategists, or academic-administrative discourse (hereinafter AAD), explores ‘text & talk’ of the Vice-Chancellors, Rectors, and Presidents of American and other universities to reveal communication strategies and values that contemporary academia use to support various university activities and especially those related to crisis management [e.g., Partch & Kinnier 2011; Bryman, 2007; Hyland 2011; Eddy 2005, 2010; van Dijk 1993; Astakhova 2020; Balcan 2010; Falkheimer and Heide 2018; Molodcha & Khilkovska 2022; Spradley 2017; Coombs 2007; Bowles 2022; Glanz 2006; O’Malley 2023]. The AAD is differentiated in the typology of the institutional discourse by a set of parameters (topos, participants, roles, purposes, genres) and defined as a subtype of both academic and administrative discourses at their intersection [Hyland 2011; Molodcha 2021]. The primary role of university leaders is to facilitate communication that supports the fulfillment of the university's mission and the broader goals of higher education. [Bryman 2007; Bowles 2022; Partch & Kinnier 2011]. For this, the chief academic administrators employ potent language to induce certain decisions reinforcing norms and values in academia. They play a crucial role in shaping the ways that power, ideology, and influence are constructed and replicated across the institution [Kouzes & Posner 1995; Falkheimer & Heide 2018; Eddy 2005, 2010; Andersson 2020].

Various aspects of AAD have been thoroughly explored [Bryman, 2007; Hyland, 2011; Coombs 2007, etc.], particularly in terms of how academic administrators handle strategic issues and manage organizational change. Previous

studies have explored several facets, including argumentation and rhetoric techniques in critical academic contexts [e.g., Tannen, 2002; Molodcha & Khilkovska, 2022; Vassileva 2022], communication strategies in support of innovations and work-life balance in higher education [Denson & Szelényi 2022], ethics and strategies for change management on campus [e.g., Eddy 2005, 2010].

Research into the rhetorical strategies, communication techniques and values upheld by American University Presidents' responses to military conflicts, particularly Russia's 2022 large-scale invasion of Ukraine, has yet to be undertaken. During crises like wars and terrorism, society often looks up to academia for guidance, viewing universities as 'beacons of hope' and 'moral compass' committed to using education for the greater good [Faust 2018]. Van Dijk [1993, p. 197] argues that "schools and universities may be more influential than the mass media in shaping the early development of social cognitions". Understanding the crisis rhetoric and ethos of academia can empower strategists and decision-makers.

1.2. Material, aim and design of the research. One of the recent tragic events, Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine (hereafter R22IU), quickly attracted attention of global leaders and academic leaders alike, as the invasion significantly impacted Ukraine's, European and the world's security as well as political, economic and social resilience. Immediately following the large-scale invasion on February 24, 2022, presidents of prominent American universities issued statements on the invasion addressing the academic community and stakeholders ("academic committee of the university", "fellow members of the university's community", and the Faculty Senate). These statements aimed to represent the voice of academia and synchronize the thoughts and ideals within academic circles:

(1) *"Now is a time for all voices to be raised. Institutions devoted to the perpetuation of democratic ideals and to the articulation of human rights have a responsibility to condemn such wanton aggression."* [73, President Lawrence Bacow].

The corpus of the present study comprises 12 appellative statements on R22IU that vary in length, ranging from shorter pieces of 70-120 words to longer ones of 588-700 words, totaling 18,000 symbols. The statements were issued by the Presidents of leading U.S. higher education institutions [65-76]. The analysis of the official websites of the top 50 American universities (as per the Education College Rankings, 2022) revealed that only the Presidents of Harvard, Yale, Columbia University, MIT, Princeton, Johns Hopkins University and New York City University made public statements on R22IU. Other chief academic administrators

responded to the invasion by organizing special educational events featuring experts in international relations and political science, such as at Barnard College and New York University [65; 77]. The U.S. was chosen due to its strong influence on the global higher education sector and longstanding partnerships with universities in many countries, including those directly involved in the conflict.

In the classification of AAD genres [Molodcha 2021], the statements on R22IU are categorized under the appellative genre which includes forms such as Statements, Remarks and Letters of Appeal which offer official views of academia on significant matters.

The research aims to examine the official statements of top U.S. University Presidents regarding Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine using a corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The study seeks to reveal both macrotextual and microtextual features of these statements as well as the values held by the academic community that are based on the interpretation of the findings.

Based on the objectives of the study, the research design includes the following key steps: (1) *Contextual analysis*. This involves reconstructing the sociocultural and historical context of the R22IU statements by analyzing the corpus findings and references. (2) *Textual analysis and typology*. Using digital analytical tools and established framework [Fairclough 2005; Hyland 2011; Bryman 2007; Bhatia 1993; Andersson 2020], this step examines the genre scheme and communication strategies of the statements on R22IU. (3) *Interpretative synthesis*. The research interprets the results based on the identified communication patterns and the use of Schwartz values matrix [Suryaningsih 2020; Smith & Schwartz 2012]. The findings are synthesized to draw conclusions, suggest implications and identify potential areas for future research.

The present research contributes to the body of work on higher education leadership communication and broadens the scope of linguistic studies on public discourse related to Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine. The latter include those on escalating panic and national discontent in European states [Pipchenko 2023], multimodal political narratives in Chinese media [Zhabotynska and Ryzhova 2022], and media's role in shaping Kremlin narratives [Tarique & Shaheen 2023]. Other research examine the political narrative on American social media using cognitive-semiotic and multimodal approaches [Shevchenko 2002; Kazharski 2022], analyzes war metaphors in American and Russian media [Pawliszko 2023], and explores President Zelensky's leadership and rhetoric [Brittain-Hale 2023].

To analyze the socio-discursive characteristics of university presidents' statements on R22IU, I used a CDA framework engaging corpus data. This approach integrates concepts from discourse analysis, corpus studies, rhetoric, genre theory, and pragmatics. The strength of CDA lies in its ability to reveal how language reflects and constructs power dynamics and values through strategic discourse. As Khaken (1985) notes, the synergy of various linguistic disciplines and methods bridges gaps between the fields involved and offers a holistic view of the phenomenon.

In this study, traditional CDA methods outlined by Teun A. van Dijk (1993, 2002, 2006), Norman Fairclough (1995, 2005), and Ruth Wodak (2015) are integrated with digital tools such as Google Trends, sentiment analyzers, and Voyant tool. This approach enables a detailed analysis of the genre, pragmatic, rhetorical, and stylistic features of R22IU statements, and provides insights into the socio-historical context of the discourse [van Dijk 2006; Yang & Hu 2022; Mautner 1995; Scherling & Foltz 2023].

In critical discourse studies, discourse, i.e. language use in speech and writing, is viewed as a form of social practice. It is both shaped by and shapes institutions and social structures [Wodak & Meyer 2016, p. 5-6]. Discourse depends on the context, and it is a part of the context [van Dijk 2006; Yang & Hu 2022]. According to van Dijk (2006), the context-free approach to the study of discourse is constrained and superficial. Understanding both intra-textual (co-text) and extra-textual contexts is essential for grasping meaning, communicative intentions, implicitness, and illocutionary force [Yang and Hu 2022].

Being an integral concept in critical discourse studies, power is defined as mechanisms capable of inducing behaviors or discourses [Wodak & Meyer 2015; van Dijk 2002; Fairclough 1995]. Power is analyzed through discourse where social actions have manifestations [Wodak & Meyer 2015]. The CDA framework examines how power is constructed and maintained in discourse, revealing arguments for prioritizing certain groups and decisions [van Dijk 2000, 2002; French & Raven 1959]. CDA aims to raise awareness and contribute to social change by empowering groups [Wodak & Meyer 2015]. Power holders, influenced by cultural, gender, and ethical factors, exhibit specific behaviors, 'scripts,' and communication styles [Kouzes & Posner 1995; Hofstede 1980].

Corpus linguistics methodology, with its statistical and computer-based quantitative analysis tools, reveals insights into discourse and context [Evert 2007; Scherling & Foltz 2023]. The digital tool Voyant identifies key clusters of magnet collocates ('nodes') and themes in the statements. The Corpus of Contemporary

American English (COCA) and Google Trends provide data on linguistic and sociohistorical context before and after the invasion 24.02.22. Additionally, sentiment analysis tools help detect the dominant sentiment of the statements.

To analyze specific genre and pragmatic features, Aristotle's rhetoric theory, politeness theories, and key pragmatic categories are utilized. Genre, viewed as a stable type of speech act, is defined as

“a form of concrete statements (oral or written) of participants in a particular area of human activity, reflecting the conditions and goals in their content, linguistic style, and compositional structure. These three components are inextricably linked” [Bakhtin 1986, p. 76-77].

The identified rhetorical moves are strategies communicators routinely use to achieve social purposes [Hyland 2011; López-Ferrero & Bach 2016]. The genre's coherent patterning reflects typical move sequences [Fairclough 2005]. According to Bhatia (1983, 1993), the communicative purpose shapes the genre's move structure. These macro features, along with micro strategies such as lexical, grammatical, and stylistic devices, constitute 'the property of the genre' [Bhatia 1983; Bawarshi & Reiff 2010]. Aristotle's *Rhetorica* outlines three classical rhetorical arguments: logos (logic), pathos (emotional appeal), and ethos (credibility). Ethos is further supported by practical wisdom, moral virtue, and goodwill [Falkheimer & Heide 2018]. For pragmatic analysis, Brown and Levinson's Politeness Theory is applied, focusing on the concept of 'Face' as crucial for effective interaction. 'Face' involves two needs: positive appraisal ('positive face') and the desire for autonomy ('negative face') [Brown & Levinson 1987]. In pragmatics, speech acts are communicative utterances that perform functions, either directly, with explicit meaning, or indirectly, where the meaning is inferred [Searle 1976; Grice 1975; Shevchenko 2022; Duffy 2008].

The culmination of this research, which integrates quantitative and qualitative data from relevant scientific fields and methods [Khaken 1985] is to identify the values and ideals promoted by American university leaders in crisis communication, such as those involved in the R22IU. According to Van Dijk [2006, p.13], the discourse of a group reflects its “socioculturally shared knowledge, group attitudes, and values (or “belief systems”)”, which are intended to be “accessible, retrievable, and applicable.” The interpretation of the findings is grounded in Schwartz's theory of basic values, which has been shown to operate across different cultures [Schwartz 2012; Smith & Schwartz 1997]. Schwartz' model of universal values includes four broad dimensions, each with specific features: openness to change (encompassing hedonism, self-direction), self-transcendence (including universalism, benevolence), conservation

(comprising security, conformity, and tradition), and self-enhancement (covering achievement, power) with the correspondent features referring to each sector [Schwartz 2012, p. 9]. The values identified in the discourse analysis of university presidents' statements concerning the R22IU fit one of these motivational segments.

3. Results

The findings encompass both macro- and microlevels of discourse analysis. At the macrolevel, linguistic and sociohistorical features of the statements and the genre schemes are identified through corpus and content analysis. At the microlevel, the study focuses on discursive strategies and tactics. It examines specific arguments, speech acts, and stylistic devices to convey particular intentions and concepts.

3.1. Macrocharacteristics of the statements on R22IU: corpus clusters and the genre scheme

3.1.1. *'War' and 'invasion' clusters.* The corpus analysis of the U.S. University Presidents' statements conducted by using the Voyant tool, identified a core set of the top 25 keywords, including 'Ukraine', 'students', 'community', 'university', 'support', 'scholars', 'Russia', 'war', 'invasion', 'peace', etc. (see Figure 1). Among these, two magnet collocates 'invasion' and 'war' helped to uncover the sociopolitical features related to the genre and highlight the main theme of the statements. The Voyant-based analysis of clusters featuring the collocate '**invasion**' distinctly points to the involvement of academia in evaluating R22IU. The corpus shows a wide scope of evaluative and connotative descriptors associated with 'invasion', reflecting the emotional weight of the R22IU and its 'terrible consequences.' Specifically, the collocate 'invasion' frequently forms collocations with adjectives: 'capricious ~', 'senseless~', 'unprovoked ~', 'Russian ~', 'Russian government's ~', 'violent government's ~'; as well as prepositions: e.g., ~ of a peaceful neighbor. These collocations underscore academia's intense condemnation of Russia's actions in Ukraine. Similarly, the collocate '**war**' forms collocations with verbs like 'escalate', 'upend'; proper names such as 'Vladimir Putin's ~', and prepositions including '~in Europe', '~ in Ukraine', '~ of aggression', 'from the ~'; and within the word combinations: 'wider land ~', 'World ~ II'. The collocations with the collocates 'invasion' and 'war' with productive lexical patterns form corresponding themes: a) war / invasion with collocates like 'threats', 'refuge', 'World War II', 'major land war', 'risk', 'escalate', 'Vladimir Putin' and b) academia's response ('educated', 'community', 'students', 'scholars', 'statements', etc.).

1	ukraine	28
2	students	25
3	community	19
4	university	18
5	ukrainian	17
6	support	17
7	scholars	17
8	russia	16
9	yale	15
10	members	15
11	president	13
12	mit	13
13	russian	12
14	invasion	12
15	war	10
16	continue	10
17	people	9
18	international	9
19	faculty	9
20	2022	9
21	world	8
22	skoltech	8
23	research	8
24	peace	8
25	u.s	7

Figure 1. The top 25 key collocates identified by Voyant in the University Presidents' Statements

The analysis of the collocates 'invasion' and 'war' in the COCA prior to February 24, 2022, offers additional insights. Examining the corpus, which includes references to military conflicts in Iraq, the Gulf, Afghanistan, Korea, and others during the Cold and Post-Cold War periods of the 20th century, reveals the expansion of global text clusters and the emergence of new conceptual domains, such as 'Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine' and 'academia's response to it'.

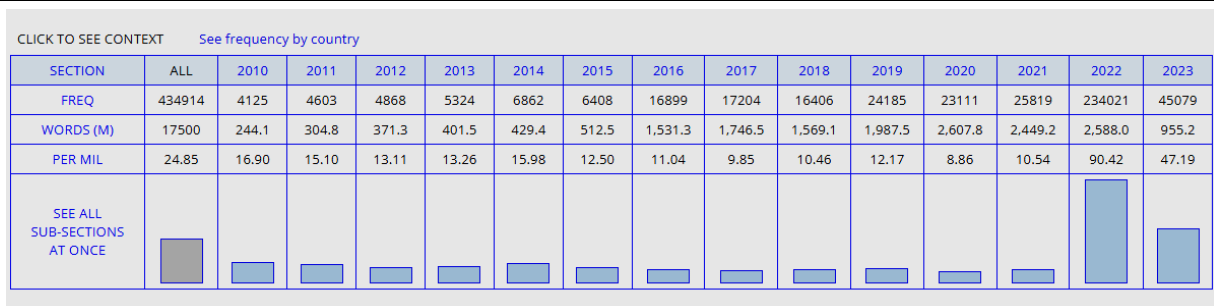


Figure 2. The intensity of “invasion” usage during 2010-2022/23

The analysis of the collocates ‘invasion’ and ‘war’ in COCA shows also that two previously infrequent terms, due to limited military activity in recent decades, surged in 2022 (see Figure 2). This increase signals the end of what has been described as a “peaceful period,” “post-1945 peace,” or “violence decline.” [Pinker 2012, Chapter 6]. The heightened use of ‘invasion’ and ‘war’ reflects a widespread condemnation of military actions and leaders' initial reluctance to label the conflict as a 'war'.

3.1.2. *Linguosociopolitical context of the Russia’s invasion of Ukraine (2022).* The analysis of terminology used in the aftermath of February 24, 2022, reveals a dynamic interplay of lexical units to describe the tragic events. ‘Invasion’ was predominantly used by Ukrainian officials and other countries to denote Russia’s actions against Ukraine. In contrast, Russia employed the terms like “*special military operation*,” “*de-nazification*,” and “*demilitarization operation*” [Botkin-Kowackiy 2022] to frame the conflict in a different light. Additionally, new semantic nominations and coinages emerged, such as “*hot war*”, which contrasted with the term ‘*cold war*’ [Chappell 2022], and “*finlandization*,” referring to Ukraine’s situation as analogous to Finland's geopolitical maneuvering during the Cold War [Eckel 2022]. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Ukraine later structured the terminological field by issuing a glossary that included the terms like “Russia’s aggression against Ukraine”, “Russian occupation”, “Temporary occupation and attempted annexation of territories of Ukraine”, “Russia’s full-scale invasion of independent Ukraine”, etc. As events unfolded, the term ‘war’ – denoting a large-scale military conflict – gradually accumulated the dominance over ‘invasion,’ which etymologically suggests a swift act (Merriam-Webster dictionary). This shift underscores the evolution of discourse from focusing on the nature of military action to the broader implications of a full-scale conflict.

3.1.3. *Genre scheme.* The corpus analysis based on clustering and content analysis of the appellative statements regarding the events of February 24, 2022, identified a *scheme* or logic that the U.S. university leaders employed. This pattern

consists of four key moves or macrostrategies including *criticism*, *punishment*, *support* and *appeal to peace* (see Figure 3). Amidst strong condemnation of Russia's aggression and invasion of Ukraine, academic chief administrators detailed their universities' policies which included supporting both Ukrainian and Russian students and scholars, penalizing the strategic American-Russian scientific collaborations and encouraging peacemaking efforts.

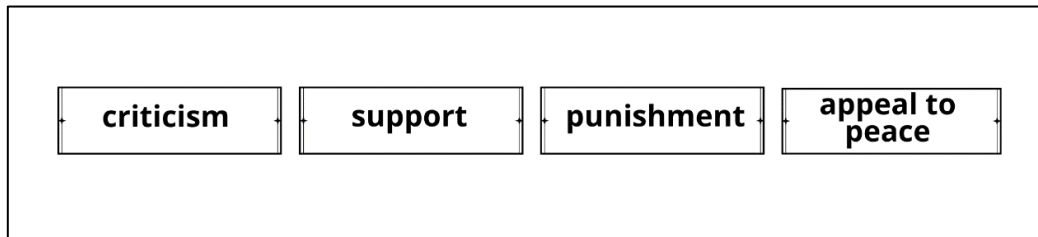


Figure 3. The genre scheme of the university leaders' statements on Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine

Within each move, university leaders employed specific lexical, grammatical, stylistic, and pragmatic devices. The operating complex of three rhetorical arguments – logos, pathos, ethos of the appellative texts provides credibility of the facts, competence, relevance, emotional charge and ethics of the statements. These rhetorical appeals are utilized in every move with the prevalence of one of them or their combination activating a certain set of devices within the move.

3.2. Microparameters: strategies and devices within the move

Move 1: Criticism of the invasion

Explicit criticism opens the statements under study, expressing categorical disapproval of the invasion and its consequences. The criticism targets violations of “international law”, “disrespect of human life” and “unprovoked attack and aggression of the country-invader.” According to the discourse analysis results, these statements predominantly use *pathos* to engage the emotions and imagination of the recipients, emphasizing the dramatic nature of the current events. The disapproval is conveyed through the following resources:

Lexical and grammatical devices

1.1. Connotative vocabulary: a) military / war terminology (*combatants, casualties, civilians and non-combatants, hostilities, refugees bomb shelters, bottles for Molotov cocktails, Russian troops, nuclear arsenal*); b) negatively connotative vocabulary: adverbs describing the actions (*rashly invoked, spoke clearly and forcefully against the crisis, tragically mounting*); connotative adjectives (*capricious and senseless invasion, unspeakable acts, deplorable actions, wanton aggression,*

grave uncertainty, reckless threats, brutal event); nouns and noun-phrases (destruction, dread and sorrow, de-escalation of the hostilities, nuclear arsenal, turbulence and unrest, crisis, humanitarian catastrophe); action (dynamic) verbs (“urged”, “forced”, “escalated”).

1.2. Proper names of the involved persons and countries (“my thoughts are with the *Ukrainian* people; *Vladimir Putin*’s war of aggression”; “*President Vladimir Putin*’s decision to invade *Ukraine*” [74].

1.3. Personal pronoun I, as a grammatical item representing the speaker in a discourse, serving a pragmatic function within expressions of disapproval [Fromkin et al. 2011; Suryaningsih 2020]. It conveys personal leadership and an immediate, individual response to the tragedy. “*I am shocked by and condemn...*”; “*I have watched with horror the unfolding humanitarian catastrophe in Ukraine...*” [67; 74].

Expressive syntax. In their disapproval of the invasion, academic leaders offer personal reflections, echoes and reminiscences, sharing tragic family stories. They use analytical structures like the Past Simple, Past Continuous and Present Perfect in the active voice.

(2) “*For me, seeing so many Ukrainian families fleeing their homes in advance of hostile forces has inescapable personal echoes. Right before World War II, my parents fled from the western Ukraine-Moldova region as refugees. My father was able to escape first, to Ecuador. My mother followed, bringing my eldest brother, then just a year old...*” [72, President L. Rafael Reif]. Personal echoes and reminiscences are constructed using past simple and past continuous constructions in the active voice, incorporating personal pronouns and proper names to convey the stories of real people. **Pragmatic devices.** Direct speech acts, particularly assertives using the predominant analytical forms of Present and Past tense in active voice constructions, are employed to announce university’s bold actions.

(3) “*Yale condemns this unjustified and unprovoked attack... Below, I highlight some of the ways Yale is responding to this crisis...*” [74, President Peter Salovey]. Assertives represent the action-centered, agent-controlled dynamics of the events and provide the functionality of the communicator’s judgmental emotional disapproval.

Move 2: Support of the faculty affected by the invasion

Despite the strong criticism of R22IU, leading American universities have notably extended help and support to both Ukrainian and Russian faculty, emphasizing the need “*to make sure there is support for students of both*

nationalities ...” [76, President Ronald J. Daniels]. The multifaceted support of the **Ukrainian faculty** included psychological support offering shelter and space for emotional relief and meditational events like ‘Vigil nights’; informational assistance hosting pro-Ukrainian educational events to promote and advance the knowledge of Ukraine’s culture, history and language within the university; financial assistance in the frame of opening summer school, post-graduation options and scholarships as well as supporting investors who stand with Ukraine; legal assistance providing information about Temporary Protected Status, advocating for policies on the governmental level to protect legal status and free consultations on law issues [65-76].

The pragmatic analysis of the statements, focusing on broader contexts and authors' intentions, reveals the use of both direct and indirect speech acts [Duffy 2008; Brown & Levinson 1987]. University leaders employ **positive ‘face’** strategies to offer support and reinforcement to the faculty affected by the invasion. Within the move, and drawing on the rhetorical arguments of *ethos* and *pathos*, the support for the Ukrainian faculty is articulated through *direct speech acts* utilizing two main devices:

Commissives

(4) *Harvard will continue to support in whatever ways we can members of our community who face grave uncertainty. We will continue to share knowledge of Ukraine and advance understanding of its culture, history, and language. And we will continue to speak against cruelty, and to act with compassion as we hold to hope for resolution – and for liberation* [73, President Bacow]. Promising certain actions and measures, through the use of future simple constructions, ensures perlocutionary effects.

Assertives

(5) *The Office of University Life and the International Students and Scholars Office are reaching out to everyone affected to offer whatever assistance we can* [68, President Lee C. Bollinger]. Assertive speech acts use the analytical structures of present perfect and present progressive in the active voice to declare ongoing support and current assistance to the affected members of the academic community.

A common tool used to support those affected is the pronoun ‘we,’ which fosters a sense of shared support and solidarity within the academic community. For example, “... we, as an institution of learning, will expand the initiative we put in

place for students and scholars displaced by the crisis...” [68, President Lee C. Bollinger]. The *positive ‘face’* strategies reflecting the intentions and actions of American universities in supporting **Russian faculty** affected by the war – including a) support for Russian students and PhD holders; b) recognition of Russian scholars’ talent and expertise and c) expressions of pride in mutual projects – are realized through the following means:

Assertives

(6) *We have in addition been in touch with our **students from Russia**, who are also a long way from home in a difficult time... MIT faculty were eager to create new research alliances in areas of shared interest with **top colleagues** around the world, including **Russia, a nation with a pool of exceptional scientific talent*** [72, President L. Rafael Reif]. Assertives are used to compliment the talent of Russian scholars using positively connotative vocabulary: adjectives (“*vibrant university*”, “*first-rate research*”, “*exceptional scientific talent*”, “*top colleagues*”) and verbs (“*reach out*”, “*eager to create*”).

Expressives

(7) *Ending our connection to this academic **community comes with considerable sadness**, but the actions of the Russian government made our choice clear... This **does not diminish our pride in the work we did to develop Skoltech** and in the **first-rate research that has flowed from the relationship*** [72, President L. Rafael Reif]. The speech acts expressing regret over the termination of the mutually beneficial and strategic Skoltech program are used as a positive ‘face’ strategy.

Move 3: Penalizing the projects strategic to Russia

To achieve a certain level of objectivity in judgment and rationalize the punishment, rhetorical arguments *logos* and *ethos* are employed. Within this move *explicit* speech acts involving the postponing, banning of donations and suspension of services to those supporting Russia’s invasion as well as termination of educational and scientific collaborations, are executed using the following resources:

Vocabulary. The penalizing strategy, grounded in reason and ethics to enhance the illocutionary force of the statements, is supported by relevant lexical units, including a) proper names of the strategic organizations, alliances, politicians, b) terminology related to law, business, science, finance and c) numerals (numbers and years) as illustrated in the following example:

(8) “*In 2011, the United States was striving to “reset” its Russia relationship; At the same time, Russia was seeking to establish an **innovation-based economy** and MIT faculty were eager to create **new research alliances** in areas of shared interest with top colleagues around the world, including Russia....*” [72, President L. Rafael Reif].

Negation. One effective device for conveying explicit messages of punishment is the use of negation within active voice constructions, which avoids hedging. In the corpus of statements, the research has identified several forms of negation employed: a) lexical negation “...has decided to **remove** Russian securities from its indices, which **eliminates** the very small passive indirect exposure to Russia that Yale previously held”; b) double negative construction neither/nor to negate each of two things. “Yale **has no formal partnerships** with Russian institutions at this time, **nor do we plan** on forming any”; c) verbal constructions with ‘not’ (“*but the university is **not limiting** faculty-led collaborations with academics in Russia...*”) [74, President Peter Salovey]. **Explicit speech acts.** Direct utterances include the exercitives and commissives employing the use negations and personal deixis, along with the proper name of the university, to emphasize the authority and position of the sender in AAD.

Exercitives or advising on postponing educational summer programs for safety reasons: (9) “*Currently, the U.S. Department of State is **advising against travel to Russia***”. “... all university programs that involve travel to Russia need to **be deferred**.” [74, President Peter Salovey].

Commissives on banning the donations and services of those who support Russia’s invasion and who are under U.S sanctions:

(9) “*We will not allow individuals subject to U.S. sanctions to make donations to the university*” [74, President Peter Salovey].

Implicit speech acts. Commissives regarding adherence to American laws on sanctioning strategic pro-Russian organizations impose penalizing actions against those responsible for the invasion.

(10) “*Yale will respect all U.S. government sanctions applicable to Russia and will continue to be aware of the sanctions imposed by other countries*” [74, President Peter Salovey].

Move 4: Appeal to peace

University presidents' statements on R22IU conclude with rhetoric focused on peacemaking. The corpus analysis identified the collocate 'peace' as one of the magnet words, underscoring its significance. The concept of 'peace' is crucial to explore as it forms an integral part of the 'war and peace' dyad, which models the essence of humanity's existence. The cluster '**peace**' with collocates like '*international*', '*security*', '*order*', '*pillar of stability*', '*liberty*', '*life*' reveals the profound importance and methodological attributes associated with peace. The cluster '**peacemaking**' together with collocates '*fragile*', '*breach*' and '*break*' point to creating a strategy to 'establish peace' through '*compassion*' and '*diplomacy*', '*generosity*' and '*patience*' which require empathy, reason and effort. (11) "*I feel certain I speak for our entire community in appealing for a swift end to the combat, urging a de-escalation of the hostilities, offering **compassion and support** to the people of Ukraine, and hoping for the **success of diplomacy***" [69, President Andrew Hamilton].

(12) "*We should make a special effort to **be generous and patient with one another at this time** ...*" [74, President Peter Salovey].

In the appeal for peace, resourcefulness is evident in the speech acts performing locutionary acts. These include the use of modals and future tense constructions with gerunds to underline the intention for concrete steps in the peace-making strategy:

Assertives ("*I feel certain I speak for our entire community...*"; "*At moments like this, we are reminded of the fragility of peace and life...*") [74, President Peter Salovey];

Commissives ("*We should make a special effort*"; "*Yale will continue to work in any way we can to support students and scholars from Ukraine and those from elsewhere in the region*") [74, President Peter Salovey].

Expressives ("*I appreciate their engagement...*"; "*And let us hope that diplomacy and peacemaking bring this breach of international security and peace to a swift end*") [71, President Marc Tessier-Lavigne].

The text analysis of the statements revealed that directives previously identified in the asymmetrical AAD [Molodcha & Khilkovska 2022], which conveyed confrontation are avoided in the appellative statements regarding R22IU. This shift can be attributed to a more diplomatic mode of communication.

The results are systematized in *Table 1*, which details the range of rhetorical, pragmatic, and stylistic devices employed in each move.

Table 1. University leaders' communication strategies and language devices on Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine

Move 1. Disapproval of the invasion	Move 2. Support of the Ukrainian and Russian faculty affected by the invasion	Move 3. Penalizing projects strategic to Russia	Move 4. Appeal to 'peace'
Negative 'face' strategies to express explicitly the disapproval of the invasion.	Positive explicit and implicit 'face' strategies.	Negative 'face' explicit and implicit strategies	Explicit speech acts appealing in support of peacemaking strategies
Criticizing the violations of the international law, disrespect of human life, unprovoked attack and aggression of the country-invader within the <i>pathos</i> argument with the certain devices: 1. Lexical and grammar tools 1.1 Military lexical vocabulary 1.2. Negative connotative vocabulary 1.3. Proper names 1.4. Pronoun (I) 2. Expressive syntax Personal reflections, echoes, reminiscences of family stories 3. Pragmatic device such as assertives with active voice present and past tense constructions.	Strategy of support of the Ukrainian faculty by providing psychological support; informational assistance, hosting pro-Ukrainian events, educational events; financial and legal assistance within the prevailing <i>ethos</i> and <i>pathos</i> arguments employs a) <u>promissives</u> with future tense form and b) assertives of the present perfect and present progressive with pronoun (we). The positive 'face' strategies to recognize Russian faculty and support mutual projects are recognized by means of a) assertives with positively connotative vocabulary and b) <u>expressives</u> (expressing pity to stop strategic collabs).	Strategies of penalizing Russia with postponing educational summer programs, banning donations from pro-Russia <u>organisations</u> , termination of American-Russian strategic alliances within the dominance of <i>logos</i> and <i>ethos</i> arguments employ 1. Explicit and implicit speech acts including <u>exercitives</u> , <u>commissives</u> ; 2. Connotative vocabulary; 3. Negation (lexical negation, double negation constructions, not-verboids). The explicit utterances of obeying the U.S. law generates implicatures of condemning the pro-Russia supporters' initiatives).	Speech acts in the 'peacemaking talk' appeal to <i>generosity</i> and compassion as well as to <i>diplomacy</i> employing a) assertives, b) <u>commissives</u> , c) <u>expressives</u> modals and future tense construction to manifest intention <u>realise</u> steps in peace-making strategy.

4. Interpretation and implications

4.1. The corpus-assisted Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) of the top U.S. University Presidents' statements regarding Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022, resourcing from the identified patterns, led to two strategic observations.

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The statements of American university leaders responding to the crisis event such as R22IU are marked by a *balanced rhetoric*. Leaders of the U.S. academia employ complementary strategies on multiple levels. Conceptually, they combine explicit criticism of the invasion and penalization of strategic projects while also supporting students and faculty from both countries involved in the conflict and appealing to peacemaking efforts through diplomacy and compassion. The university leaders utilize a range of rhetorical arguments – logos, pathos and ethos – and employ the dynamic use of negative and positive ‘face’ strategies as well as explicit and implicit speech acts – assertives, commissives, expressives. The linguistic devices used in these appellative genre statements include lexical means (connotative vocabulary, military terminology, proper names), grammatical structures (active voice with negations), and stylistic elements (personal reminiscences) (Table 1). The moderate nature of statements about the invasion is supported by sentiment analysis findings. Tools such as MonkeyLearn and Free Sentiment analysis, which processed the text corpus, indicate that the sentiment of the statements is generally neutral – 54 % out of 100 %, and 2.7, close to the neutral mark or ‘norm’. This suggests that the U.S. academia is making a conscious effort to maintain an objective and reasonable approach to crisis communication, particularly in sensitive contexts such as war or invasion.

The corpus and discourse frequencies and correlations revealed that the U.S. academia and its leaders adhere to the specific set of values fitting Schwartz motivational domains – *conservation* and *self-transcendence*. The indicated values emphasize the importance of *security* and *stability* within society. They also highlight *conformity* referring to the restraint from the impulses to destabilize order and smooth group interactions as well as *tradition*, which relates to respect, commitment, acceptance of group ideas, loyalty and solidarity. These values are deemed vital for maintaining a cohesive academic environment. In promoting *self-transcendence*, the U.S. academic leaders promote *benevolence*, which focuses on enhancing the welfare of individuals and communities. The emphasis on benevolence arises from the fundamental need for affiliation and it fosters cooperation and smooth interactions. *Universalism* is also encouraged, stressing the importance of appreciation, tolerance, and the welfare of all groups, thereby supporting a more inclusive and empathetic approach (Figure 4) [Schwartz 2012, p. 7].

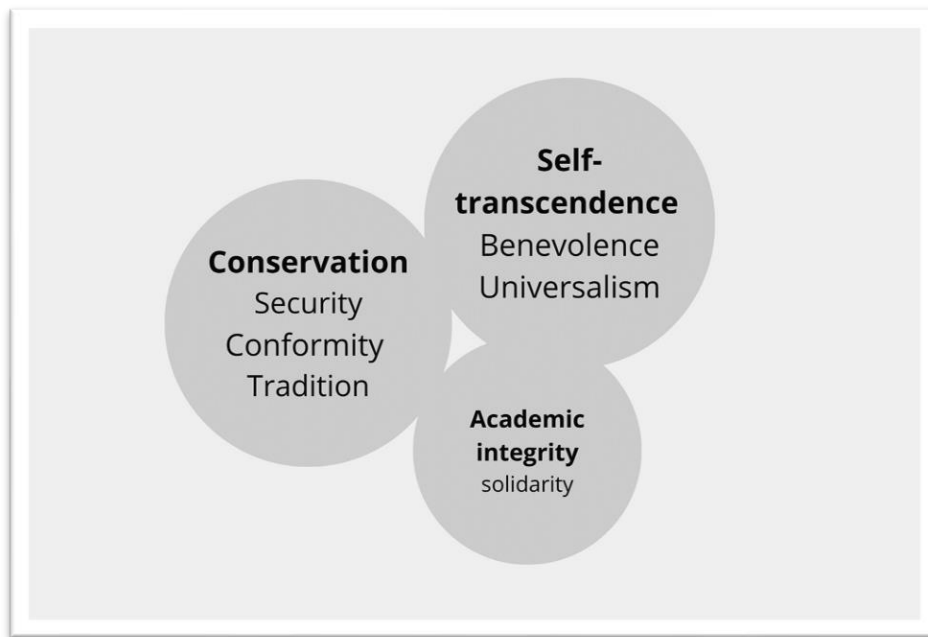


Figure 4. Academic values based on the Schwartz theory of basic values

In addition to the abovementioned humanistic appeals, the U.S. academic leaders also underscore the importance of *academic integrity* by emphasizing values such as *solidarity* and *collegiality* [Bieliauskaite 2021; Pecorari & Sutherland-Smith 2021]. They offered substantial support to scholars and students from both countries involved in the conflict, thereby demonstrating a strong commitment to these principles.

4.2. The results, which indicate the specific rhetorical strategies and ethics employed by the American university leaders responsible for decision-making in critical situations, offer valuable insights into the field of *crisis communications related to academia* during military conflicts. These findings are significant on sociolinguistic, conceptual, rhetorical, ethical and methodological levels. A crisis, defined as an event or series of events causing high uncertainty and significantly affecting societal groups [Coombs 2007; Spradley 2017], has its sociolinguistic attributes to be aware of. Critical events like invasions and wars, as observed in this research, bring terminological chaos heightening individuals' emotional responses. Over time, this lack of terminological structure is typically resolved through the establishment of lexicographic conventions. The corpus-assisted CDA framework, using tools like Voyant, Google Trends, and sentiment analyzers, reveals conceptual domains and the values guiding crisis communication.

The university leaders' response, employing 'from disapproval to peacemaking' rhetoric, reflecting their commitment to pro-human and academic values, aims to foster resilience and motivation amidst chaos [Coombs 2007; Andersson 2020; Eddy 2005]. Kuhn (1997) argues that timely and effective corporate crisis rhetoric protects an organization's reputation and upholds corporate social responsibility (CSR) by responsibly managing financial and social resources.

Large-scale military conflicts often result in violence against educational institutions and pose significant threats to the lives of students and academics (O'Malley, 2023). In their response, the U.S. leaders of higher education emphasize the importance of *solidarity* and *collegiality* which, despite challenges such as hierarchical dynamics within sociocultural contexts (Hofstede, 1980), helps create the secure and collaborative environment. The given approach fosters a culture of safety, inclusivity, and support within academic institutions [Glanz 2006; Bieliauskaite 2021]. Leadership training can integrate research findings to equip university strategists with valuable tools for communicating facts, perceptions, and risks during crises. This includes offering structured scripts, patterns and frameworks for managing the impacts of military conflicts, enhancing leaders' ability to articulate and assess critical issues.

5. Conclusion and prospects

To sum up, the AAD represents a strategic form of communication employed by chief academic administrators, who are expected to implement effective crisis communication strategies that incorporate ethical considerations. Using a corpus-assisted CDA approach, the study of the top U.S. university presidents' statements regarding Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine identified a balanced rhetoric incorporating various arguments, lexical choices, grammatical structures, stylistic and pragmatic devices. The discourse highlighted conservative and benevolent values, as well as a commitment to academic integrity with a particular focus on solidarity and collegiality. The discursive patterns uncovered in this research contribute significantly to the field of strategic and crisis communication, especially within academia. With rising global military potential and growing research into nuclear war rhetoric [e.g., Ghonim 2023], future studies should explore conflict resolution strategies considering gender and cultural impacts.

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Abbreviations

CDA – critical discourse analysis

AAD – academic-administrative discourse

R22IU – Russia's 2022 invasion of Ukraine

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